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TRADITIONS OF THE COOS INDIANS OF OREGON <sup>1</sup>

COLLECTED BY HARRY HULL ST. CLAIR, 2D; EDITED BY  
LEO J. FRACHTENBERG

ETHNOGRAPHICAL NOTES

THE Coos Indians lived in small villages, each of which had two chiefs. The head-chief of the tribe lived in a village called Da'nfs. He visited frequently the other villages, travelling with a great crowd around him and gambling and playing shinny wherever he came. Chiefs were elected according to their intellectual and social qualities. They were usually wise men, good speakers in the council, and wealthier than the rest of the people. No Indian could do anything without having consulted previously the head-chief. His orders were usually obeyed. But when his judgment seemed faulty, the people of wealth might be appealed to. When they opposed the chief, he was overruled. Of the two village-chiefs, one usually ranked higher. They acted as judges. They were given presents by all the other Indians. If a man gained anything, he gave the whole, or part of it, to the chiefs of his village, and received in return their help in cases of need. They usually paid the fines for their clansmen. Thus, in case of homicide, the murderer had to pay a heavy fine, which was paid by the village-chiefs. The murderer was not expected to return the fine to his chiefs, but he could do so if he desired. The fine always went to the parents or family of the murdered man. When a crime had been committed, the inhabitants of the village in which the murderer lived danced for a number of nights (usually five) a dance called *saat*, — the murder-dance. The murderer himself had to arrange the dance and select men to help him. This dance was due to the belief that an omission of this ceremony would turn the murderer's blood black and kill him in course of time. The dance and the paying of the fine eased the conscience of the murderer, whose mind until then was in darkness.

The Coos Indians believed in shamans, who were able to discover who had taken or stolen an article and who could induce the thief to return it to the owner. If the thief did not want to give up the stolen goods, the shamans held a council and threatened to turn him into a wild animal by means of their powers. This threat invariably had the desired effect. The shamans obtained their power in dreams, after swimming and walking about at night.

<sup>1</sup> The following notes and tales were collected by Mr. St. Clair in 1903. The traditions were recorded in the form of texts. Since these, however, require further study on the spot, it seemed desirable to make the tales themselves accessible to students. The translations follow as nearly as possible the interlinear and free translations given by the collector. — LEO J. FRACHTENBERG.

The Coos Indians had no ceremonial dances of great importance. Dancing was usually resorted to as a pastime. After a man was initiated as a shaman, he gave a great dance called *laxqa'was*, in which men and women participated. The dance lasted a whole night.

Marriages were arranged by the parents of the bride, who was purchased from them. If a rich man had a boy three, four, or ten years old, and knew a friend who had a girl of the same age, he would purchase this child for his son. The children were married, but did not live together until they attained marriageable age. A man bought his wife from her father, no matter whether she was willing or not. Only in cases where the purchase amount was not sufficient and the girl objected too strongly to the marriage, could she escape marrying the would-be buyer. Ten fathoms of beads (*elkachic*), a couple of blankets, an otter-hide, or a canoe, was the usual price paid for a girl. A chief's daughter was priced higher. She was usually bought with woodpecker-scalps valued so much because of the fact that dancing-caps were made of them. If a man's wife was unfaithful, her husband went to her parents, who returned the purchase-price. Sometimes the woman's paramour, too, had to pay a fine, invariably equal to the amount paid by the husband to the parents of the girl. The girl went to live with her husband as soon as she was mature. When the first signs of maturity appeared, she was secluded for ten days in a dark place, and had to go out at night-time to bathe and walk. Sometimes some other young woman kept her company till the end of the ten days.

When a child was born, the friends of the family were usually invited to a feast, and all leading men received presents from the parents of the child. After the child was five days old or more, another feast was given, at which the child received a name. The naming was done in the following way: First the guests agreed upon a name, which was submitted to the mother of the child for approval. The name being satisfactory to the mother, two men sitting on opposite ends of the group of guests, and appointed by the nearest relatives of the parents, called out in a loud voice the name given to the child. Then the whole audience repeated it, and the ceremony was over. Children of poor parents were usually named by the parents themselves. A boy of about five or ten years could not be called by his childhood name to his face without being mortally offended. This could be done in talking to some one else. It was the same in the case of girls.

The Coos Indians had three kinds of houses: underground houses, called *qall yixa'wex*; lumber houses, called *q'uwa'is yixa'wex*; and grass houses, known as *wa'al yixa'wex*.

They used elk-antler for wedges, and sharpened them on very hard stones, making chisels out of them. They also made spoons of elk-antler. Knives were made of bones of whale, of dry, hard arrow-wood, or of

flint. Fire was made by drilling dried willow-roots in a hearth of cedar-wood and igniting fine, dried cedar-bark. Fire was preserved by packing *ha'otit* (?) around it. Dishes were made mostly of wood. They had no stone dishes. They made wooden pots, and knew how to weave little basket plates. Baskets were used for keeping water. Meat and other food was cooked with hot rocks. The rocks were covered with grass, the meat was laid on top, then a layer of brush and some dirt, making thus somekind of an oven. Water was boiled by throwing red-hot rocks into it.

The Coos Indians ate the meat of elks, salmon, deer, beaver, and clams. For vegetables they used fern-roots, skunk-cabbage roots, mus-sels, and a sort of grass called *yé'et*.

Tattooing was not practised among them. Their blankets were made of elk-hides, and their clothes of deer-hides. Their dress consisted of leggings and a shirt. Only the chiefs decorated their leggings with beads (*elkachic*). Hats were made of buckskin, covered with feathers of cormorants and divers. Moccasins were worn, some of them marked with juice from the red bark of the alder. The dresses of women were made of buckskin decorated with ruffles or beads. They wore leggings up to the knees, and basket-hats.

The Coos Indians were in the habit of burying small objects with the person that died. These objects were contributed by the relatives and nearest friends of the deceased.

## TALES

### I. THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED THE MERMAN

In an Indian village named Takimiya there lived five brothers and a sister. Many men from different places wished to marry the girl, but she did not want to get married. It was her custom to go swimming every day in a little creek. One day, while returning from her daily swim, she noticed that she was pregnant. Her brothers demanded to know how this had happened, but she could not give them any answer, because she did not know. After some time she gave birth to a boy, who was in the habit of crying all the time. Everything was attempted to stop the crying of the baby, but was of no avail. Her brothers therefore advised her to put it outdoors. As soon as this was done, the baby stopped crying. After a little while the mother went out to look after her boy, and noticed, to her surprise, that he was eating some seal-meat, which was strung on a small stick. She looked around to see who could have given him the meat, but could not find anybody. So she took the child into the house. But the boy started crying again, and would not let anybody sleep. Her brothers told her to take the child outside, and advised her to conceal herself and watch it. A whole day she remained outside without seeing any one. Suddenly, towards evening, a man appeared and told her to follow him, because he was her husband. At first she refused to go with him, fearing

that her relatives would not know where she had gone; but after he had assured her that she would be permitted to see her people, she took the baby in her arms and followed him. They were going into the water. Her husband told her to hang on to his belt and to keep her eyes closed. She did so, and they arrived at a village at the bottom of the sea, which was inhabited by many Indians. Her husband was one of the five sons of the chief of this village. They lived here happy and satisfied.

The boy grew up in the mean time, and acquired the habit of playing with arrows. His mother would make them for him, and tell the child, at the same time, that his five uncles, who lived above them, had lots of arrows. One day the little fellow asked his mother whether she would not take him to his uncles to get some arrows. To this the father of the boy objected, although he allowed his wife to go alone. She put on five sea-otter hides, and started on her way early in the morning. As soon as her brothers saw her, they thought she was a real otter, and began to shoot at her with arrows. The otter seemed to have been hit repeatedly, but it would come up again, so that they did not know what became of their arrows. The otter was swimming up and down the river, followed by many people in canoes, who were shooting at it, but nobody could hurt it. Seeing the fruitlessness of their efforts, everybody gave up the hunt, — with the exception of the oldest brother, who followed the otter until it reached the beach. There he saw some one moving around close to the shore. Approaching nearer, he noticed that it was a woman, and recognized her at once as his lost sister. She told him that she was the sea-otter, and showed him the arrows with which they had been shooting at her. She said, "I came here to get some arrows for my boy. My husband is the son of a chief. We are living not very far from here. Whenever the tide is low, you can see our house right in the middle of the ocean. I brought you these sea-otter skins that you might exchange them for some other things." Her brother gave her as many arrows as she could carry, and she went back to her husband. But before going down into the water, she said to her brother, "You will find to-morrow morning a whale on the beach, right in front of your landing." And so it came to pass. The whale was divided among the people.

A few months afterwards the woman visited her relatives with her husband and child, and her brothers noticed that part of her shoulders were turning into those of a dark-colored sea-serpent. She stayed a little while, and then returned home. Long afterwards many of these sea-serpents came into the harbor; but the woman never came ashore again, and was seen no more. These sea-serpents had come after arrows; and people kept on shooting at them, thereby giving them what they desired. They never returned again; but every summer and winter they would put ashore two whales as a gift to their kinsmen above the sea.

## 2. THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED THE WOLF

There lived in Takimiya a girl who had five brothers. Many men wanted her as a wife, but she did not wish to get married. She was in the habit of chopping wood every afternoon, and bringing it home by means of five tump-lines. One day she went out and brought in four loads of wood, leaving the fifth on the top of a log. While trying to lift the load, she found that she could not raise it. At first she thought that something held it down to the ground. But as this was not the case, she tried once more, with the same result. This vexed her so much that she began to cry. Suddenly there appeared a man by her side, who told her that it was he who was holding the pack. He asked her to become his wife and to follow him. After a few moments' hesitation, she consented, took up the four packs, and went with him, leaving the fifth load on the top of the log. This her brothers found afterwards, and thought that somebody had killed her. They went out searching for her slayer.

In the mean time the girl followed the man, who led her to a large lumber-house. Before entering the house, he said to her, "Wait here a while until your mother-in-law comes to take you in." The girl sat down, and soon a wolf came out, who scared her so much that she began to cry for help. The wolf went back into the house and said to the man, "The girl does not want to come in, she seems to be afraid of me." — "Of course," said the angry man, "she does not want to go in with you. Take the shape of a person, and the girl will not be afraid of you." The wolf then assumed the appearance of an old woman, and asked the girl to come in.

She entered the house, and saw there many old men, who told her that the young people had gone hunting and had not come back yet. In the evening the boys came home, each carrying a deer and throwing it off outside the house. In the house there were many things, — beads, Indian money (*hādā'yims*), and all kinds of meats. The girl stayed in the house and was very happy.

She had two boys. When the boys had grown up, she warned them not to go down to the river nor to the bay. But the boys did not mind her words, and came home one day, telling their mother that, while going to the river, they had seen some Indians with short-cut hair, running and crying. She knew at once that those were her five brothers, who were looking for her, and she told this to her husband. One day he told her that they would go and see her relatives. He gave her a heavy load of meat, some beads, and other valuable things, to take to the house of her brothers. He also told her to come back soon. She went into the house and told her people where she had been until now, and asked them not to worry about her. Before leaving, she promised to provide for them in the future, and she kept her promise. Her boys would drive live deer

or elk down the river, where the brothers could kill them easily. The man whom she had married was a wolf.

### 3. THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED THE DOG

There lived in the village of Takimiya a girl who had five brothers. She used to make baskets. She had a little house of her own outside the main building, where she used to do her work. She had a nice little dog whom she always kept in her house. One day a nice-looking young man came to her hut and wanted to know why she liked the dog so much. She told him that the dog was her only companion, that she fed him herself, and that he always slept under her bed. When the young man heard this, he killed the dog, and put his skin on. In this form he became her husband. Every night he took the little dog-hide off and went to bed with his wife. After a while she became pregnant, and her brothers wanted to know who her husband was. But she refused to tell, and her brothers gave up asking. Only her youngest brother was curious to know why she took such good care of her little dog. Not being able to find out the reason, he decided to kill the dog. One day, while his sister was going up the house-ladder, and the dog was walking behind her, he took his bow and arrow and shot him. The dog ran out of the house barking, and she followed him into the woods, where she found him lying dead. After having buried him, she kept on going through the woods until she came to a place where there was a creek. She stopped here, built a little house, and lived on fish. After some time she gave birth to twins. When the boys grew up they became hunters. One day they met some Indians who had short-cut hair, and who were crying. They related this to their mother, and she told them how this happened. She said, "When your father came to me for the first time, I had a little dog. He killed the little dog and assumed his shape. My youngest brother killed him later, thinking that it was a real dog." She also told them that she would like to go and see her brothers. One day she went to visit them, and told them that she had two sons, and that they were living in the wilderness. When her oldest brother heard this, he said to her, "Let your children come here, and I will make them my heirs, and also give each of them a wife." She went back and brought her boys to Takimiya. Here they grew to be very stout men, great shinny players, good gamblers, and strong wrestlers.

### 4. THE MAN WHO MARRIED THE BIRD

On the river Siusean there lived a young man who was a gambler. He lost his property as fast as he could acquire it. Finally it happened that he had nothing more left. His relatives could not support him. Therefore he took his fish-pole, the only thing left to him, and started up the North Fork (*Qđ'áúic*). He came to a little waterfall, and saw in it

a nice little bird (butter-ball) that he wanted to catch with his spear. But every time he was ready to throw, the bird would dive and thereby avoid the spear. Having made a few more unsuccessful attempts, he went down to the edge of the creek, and decided to dive in the water, to see whether he could not catch the bird with his hands. When he had dived, he saw a large house, and in it the bird he was trying to catch. The bird said to him, "You are my husband. Come in." He entered and heard at the other end of the house a great noise. He looked around and saw many people dancing and trying to cure a sick person. Some were gambling. He joined in the game, began to win, and continued winning right along. Then his wife asked him whether he had a sister at home, and he told her that he had a sister and a brother, and also a father who was very old and poor. He stayed in this house five days, after which the people told him that they would take him home. While they were preparing a canoe, his wife said to him, "Here are some clothes that you may take home for your sister. Whenever she puts them on she will look just like me." He took the clothes and went into the canoe with three companions, who gave him a piece of whale to take along. They told him to lie down in the canoe and to keep his eyes shut. But soon he got tired of it and opened his eyes a little. Just as he did so, a breaker nearly swamped the canoe; and his companions shouted to him, "Keep your eyes shut!" This scared him so much that he closed his eyes, and did not open them again. They were paddling under the water until they came to the beach. Here he left his companions and went afoot towards his home. While walking along he heard a noise. He approached nearer, and saw that it was his father who was wandering about the place where they had been living before, crying for his son. He approached him and asked him what he was doing. At the sight of his son, the old man uttered a cry of joy, and clasped him in his arms. Then they went towards the house, and when they came to a little creek, the old man said, "Let me carry you across the creek." But the son objected, and answered, "No, I will jump across. You can wade across. I am not going to run away; I am going home with you." When they came to the mouth of the river, they found the cut of whale that was given to the young man by his wife's relatives. They had told him that, if he would give to each of his relatives a piece of this whale, he would find a whole whale the next day. Thus he was enabled to gain wealth from this, because he could sell it. He therefore sliced the whale, and distributed it among his relatives. The next morning he found a whale on the shore. He cut it up, and sold pieces of it to the people of the village. Thus this young Indian became a rich man. His friends, too, grew rich through him.



5. THE WOMAN WHO BECAME A BEAR <sup>1</sup>

There lived in Kuwaitc a girl who was very lazy. She was so lazy that nobody could ever make her work. One day she became *têtsä'wes* (?), and her people had to shut her up. They closed her up for five days, and did not give her anything to eat or to drink. But she had a little brother of about ten or twelve years of age, who would put some water on the back of his neck, cover it up with his hair, and bring it to her to drink. In the same way he supplied her with food. In the mean time hair began to grow on her shoulders and arms, her finger-nails and teeth started to grow, and she turned into a bear. On the fifth day she said to her brother, "You must not be afraid of me. Stay right where you are, while I go to kill all my relatives." She went out and tore up first her mother and father, and then the other inhabitants of the little village. Afterwards she gathered up all their clothes and beads, and took them to the place where her little brother was, saying, "Stay here, while I go down to the creek to take a drink." When she arrived there, she got down on her hands and knees and began to drink. She kept on drinking until she turned into rock. She is there yet, and there is a tree standing on her head, an arrow-wood tree, which is her hair. Her little brother became a rich man; for he inherited all the clothes and beads that his sister had left in the house. He went away later to another Indian village, where he soon married.

6. THE REVENGE ON THE SKY-PEOPLE <sup>2</sup>

There were two brothers living in Kiwé'êt; the older one was a canoe-builder. One day, while he was at work, a man came up to him and asked, "What do you do with your canoe after it is finished?" — "I always sell it," he replied, going on with his work and holding his head down. Near the canoe that he was building lay his little dog. All at once the stranger hit the canoe-builder a terrible blow, killing him instantly. He cut off his head and walked away with it.

When the younger brother and the other relatives of the murdered man saw that he was not coming home, they went to look for him. They found him dead in the canoe, with his head cut off. The little dog was barking over the dead body. Every time he barked he would look straight up. This made them think that some one from above had committed the murder. The next day the younger brother went out to search for the murderer. He took an arrow and shot it straight into the air, and

<sup>1</sup> See Teit, "The Shuswap," *Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, vol. ii, p. 715; Farrand, "Traditions of the Chilcotin Indians," *Ibid.* p. 19; Boas, "Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians," *Ibid.* vol. i, p. 111; Teit, *Traditions of the Thompson River Indians*, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> See another version of the same tale in Boas, "Traditions of the Tillamook Indians," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, vol. xi, p. 136

then another one, and every arrow he shot hit the nock of the preceding one and stuck in it. He kept on shooting until the arrows reached the ground.

He climbed up on this chain and got to the top, where he met some Indians dancing around a man's head that they had brought home. It was his brother's head. He asked for the man who gave them this head, but he was not among them. One of their number told him that this man's wife was digging fern-roots at a certain place, and that he could find her there every morning. He went there and found the woman digging fern-roots on the banks of a river. He asked her some questions. "Do you own your canoe?" — "No." — "Then who ferries you across this river?" — "My husband always brings me over here." — "And what does he do after he has taken you across?" — "He goes back, and comes after me towards evening. He stops his boat at a little distance from the shore, and I jump in with my pack." — "What do you do with the fern-roots when you get home?" — "I dry them." — "And what do you do with them after they get dry?" — "I give them to every one in the village, except to an old couple that live not far from us." — "And what do you do afterwards?" — "Then I start cooking. I cook in a large pot and stir it with my hands." — "Don't you ever burn your hands?" — "No; it never hurts me." — "What does your husband do when you folks go to bed?" — "He goes to bed too. I always lie away from my husband, who falls asleep at once."

After he had asked all these questions, he killed the woman, put her skin on, and made himself look just like her. He then picked up her fern-roots and tied them together. Soon the husband came and stopped the canoe quite a distance away from the shore. The young man took the fern-roots on his shoulders and jumped aboard. But one of his feet touched the water, and he excused himself by saying, "I am tired and my pack is very heavy." The husband did not say anything, and the young man did exactly what the woman had told him. He made only one mistake by offering some fern-roots to the old couple. But they would not take them, and one of them exclaimed, "This woman belongs to the earth, and not here." Fortunately nobody from the other houses heard this remark.

When he came to the house where the murderer of his brother lived, he began to prepare supper. While stirring the pot with his hands, he burned them, and cried out, "Ouch! I have burnt my hands." The husband heard this, and asked, "What is the matter with you?" — "Oh, my finger is sore, and that is the reason why I cried out." Suddenly, while looking up, he saw his brother's head hanging down from the roof. He could not help crying every time he looked at it. When the husband asked for the reason of this, he answered, "There is so much smoke in the house that it hurts my eyes." When night came the supposed wife

went upstairs, and one of his brothers-in-law, on seeing him, said to his grandmother, "It seems to me that my sister-in-law looks like a man." But the old woman told the boy that the women belonging to their tribe always looked like men, and nobody spoke of it any more.

Later on, visitors from different places came and began to dance around the head, from which the blood was dripping all the time. After the dance was over, everybody went to bed. The young man took a large knife and punched a hole in every canoe in the village, except in the one that he was going to use. Then he went to bed with the husband; and as soon as the latter had gone to sleep, he cut his head off, took his brother's head, and made his escape in the canoe that he had saved. In the mean time the mother of the killed man, whose place was under the bed of her son, felt the blood dropping on her face. She made a light and saw what had happened. She woke the other people, and they soon found out that the supposed woman was gone, and with her the head that was hanging from the roof. They said, "That woman must have killed her husband," and they went after her. But since the canoes foundered as soon as they pushed them into the sea, they had to give up the chase.

In the mean time the young man climbed down the chain of arrows and got back to his village, bringing home the head of his brother. He gathered all his friends and told them to put his brother's head on to his body again. They went to work at once. There was a small spruce-tree against which they leaned the body of the dead man while they were trying to put the head back. But every time they tried, the head fell off. Finally, at the fifth trial, the head stayed on the body, which reached almost to the top of the little spruce-tree. Then the boy said to his brother, "Now you are well again." So the man went away from the tree.

The people from above could not come down to take revenge. The people of the village then said to the revived man, "You will be nothing but a woodpecker. The next generation will see you." And his children were woodpeckers, and had red heads because of the blood that was dripping from their father's head.

#### 7. THE EAGLE-WOMAN

There was a woman at Takimiya in the shape of an eagle. Every man who came to Takimiya became her husband. After the wedding ceremony she would say to her husband, "Let us go to a nice place where there is lots of fun." She would then make him sit on her back, and would fly off with him to a place where there was a lake of soft pitch. After her arrival there, she would turn right over and throw the man into the lake, where he met a miserable death.

She did this for a long time. One day a young man dreamed about this woman, and how she was killing her husbands. He went to her and told her that he wanted to become her husband. She consented, and the next

day they started for the lake. When they arrived there, the woman began her efforts to throw her young husband into the lake. But he clung to her so closely that she did not succeed. Having tried a few times, she flew back to the place where they had come from. There the young man said to her, "Now you are my wife. Come with me." She could not refuse, and went aboard her husband's canoe with him and one of his younger brothers. Her brother-in-law steered the canoe, her husband stood at the bow, and she sat in the middle. As soon as they reached the sea, her husband began to rock the boat so violently that it soon filled with water. He kept on doing this until the terrified woman began to shiver from cold, and fainted. Only then he started back. When they came ashore, the woman sat down on the sand in order to get warm, and her husband said to her, "You will always remain an eagle, and the next generation will see you. You will live on whatever comes ashore on the beach." He then left her, and never came back again.

#### 8. THE WOMEN WHO MARRIED THE BEAVER <sup>1</sup>

Two girls, who lived in Takimiya, were sent by their parents to Tsketc. In this village lived the son of a rich man who had much shell-money and many otter-hides. He was a sea-otter hunter, and had a Beaver and Muskrat working for him. When the two girls came to his house and saw the Beaver, they thought that this was the place they were sent to, and they married the old Beaver. In the evening the Beaver went out fishing, and stayed away the whole night. On the next morning, when he came home, he said to one of his wives, "I have some trout in the canoe. The big trout is for you, and the small one for your sister." The girls went down to the shore, but found only an old snag and some willow-leaves and salmon-berry sticks around it. They went back and told their husband that all they found were some beaver-cuttings lying on the top of a snag. So the old Beaver became enraged and screamed, because he could not get anything to eat.

The next night he went out again, and was gone all night. This time, however, he brought home some trout, which the girls cooked and placed before him. But he could not eat it, because he had no teeth. Every time he took a morsel in his mouth, it would drop out again.

One morning the girls saw a man bathing in the creek just above their camp, dressed in clothes elaborately decorated with beads. The young man wanted to see the girls better, because they were nice-looking. So he turned into a sea-otter and swam about in the pond. The old Beaver and the Muskrat went aboard their canoe with the wives, and pursued the sea-otter. At one time the sea-otter came up very close to the canoe, and the Beaver grasped his bow and shot an arrow at it. It dropped into the water about halfway. Then the little Muskrat shot his arrow and

<sup>1</sup> See F. Boas, *Kathlamet Texts*, p. 20.

almost hit the otter. When the girls saw this, they said to the Beaver, "It is queer that you could not shoot farther than halfway, whereas your little brother almost hit the otter." This enraged the old Beaver, and he retorted, "Why don't you go with those who can throw an arrow farther than I can?"

When they came back to the house, the girls said, "We made a mistake. It must have been this young Sea-Otter our parents wanted us to marry." And both made up their minds to go to his house. They went there, and found a nice-looking young man in the house; and they said to him, "You are our husband." The young man consented, and they all went to bed. The next morning he woke up very ill. His body was full of pimples, sores, and maggots. So the younger girl did not want him any more. But her elder sister washed his body and took good care of him. One day she said to him, "We will take you home to our parents." The young man decided to go with them, and they started on their way. He was getting weaker and weaker. He could hardly walk, and his wife had to carry him part of the way. The younger girl paid no attention to him. Whenever they sat down to take a rest, she would sit apart from them. They had nearly reached the home of the girls, when the young man began to think that it was not nice to appear in such a condition before his parents-in-law. So he said to his wife, "Go on and wait for me at the house. I shall follow you very soon." He withdrew a short distance, washed, changed his clothes, and made himself look as attractive as he had been when the girls first saw him. When he came back to the girls, he looked so handsome that the younger sister liked him again. But he did not want to have anything to do with her, and went with her elder sister into the house of her parents.

By this time the old Beaver found out that the young chief had gone off with his wives. He gathered a great crowd, and went to kill the chief for having taken away his wives. When they came within two or three miles of the house, the Beaver said to his companions, "Stay here and wait for me. Should I be killed, you will smell swamp-root leaves." They remained there, and the Beaver went to the house and knocked at the door with a big knife. The door was opened, and he stepped in. But as soon as he entered, the inhabitants killed him, took away his knife, and made his tail out of it. Then they threw him into the swamp, and said, "Now you will always remain a beaver. The next generation will see you." The companions whom he had left behind him soon smelled swamp-roots, and, knowing that the beaver was dead, turned back and went home.

#### 9. THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED THE BEAR

Once upon a time a young girl went out to pick berries. As she went along, she met a man, who invited her to his house. He was a fine-looking

man, and the girl said to herself, "I think I will go with him. He is a nice-looking man, and wants me for his wife." So she went with him to his house. But before they got home she gave birth to a child. In the house of her husband's father she saw many bears, and soon her husband himself turned into a bear. She began to feel bad, and did not know what to do. She wanted to go home, but could not remember the way.

One day she went out to pick berries, leaving her little boy at home. Soon she had filled her basket. But on her way home she fell and spilled all the berries. While standing there and looking at the spilled berries, she saw many small frogs, and made up her mind to take some of them home for her boy to play with. So she took some grass and caught many of the frogs, wrapped them up, and took them home. When she came home, her husband asked her whether she had brought any berries. She answered, "No, I spilled them all on my way home. But I brought many pets for my boy to play with." He wanted to see what these pets were, and she unwrapped the bundle and threw the frogs right on her husband. This scared him so much that he ran away. His father and the whole household became frightened, and all ran away. The woman then took her child and went home to her people, who said to these bears, "You will always remain bears, and in the next generation, whenever you see anybody, you will run away."

#### 10. THE COUNTRY OF THE SOULS

An Indian who lived in a certain village suddenly became ill. He had three sons, and said to them, "If I should die, let me lie five days before you bury me." Soon he died, and his sons kept the body in the house over night. On the next morning they put him outside, at a distance from the house. They laid him on a board, put a couple of boards on each side edgewise and one on top, and, although they watched him, they did not see that he had gone, because his body remained there.

His soul, however, went away. As soon as he started, he lost his way and did not know where to go. Finally he came to a wide trail. He saw fresh tracks on the trail and alongside of it. So he followed these tracks. Sticks were lying across the trail, marked with red paint by people who had touched them. Soon he came to the top of the trail; and when he began to go on a downhill grade, he heard sea-gulls and eagles making a noise. He wondered where those birds could be, because he could not see them. Then he came to a village. When the people from the village saw him, they began to shout from the other side, "A man is coming down, a man is coming down!" And they all ran to their canoes and went to fetch him. But he went to the landing-place and stood there smiling, because some of them had just pieces of canoes, others only half-canoes, and the rest of the canoes had holes punched in one end.

When the people came nearer, he saw among them his father, his eldest brother, and many other people whom he knew. But they did not land. They only looked at him from the river, and said, "You are a *stöndi*." And his father said to him, "Your grandmother is living down the river. Go there." So he went to the place where his grandmother was; and when he came there, he saw his grandfather sitting by the door and whittling a small stick, while his grandmother was sitting just inside the door, making a small basket. He greeted them, and they all went into the house. The house was very clean and nice. In one corner of the room there was a small basket hanging from the wall. The old man soon built a fire, took this basket down, put his hands three times into it, and took out a small dish. Then he put back the little basket, and placed the dish in front of his grandson, who at first could not see anything in it. But when he looked again, it was full of lice. He became scared and threw the dish into the fire. The lice began to crack and snap in the fire; and the old man said to him, "Oh, my grandson, people always eat lice when they come here first." His grandparents knew all the time that he was a *stöndi*, but they did not tell him. They told him, however, that a woman had arrived the day before, and that they were going to dance for her, and play shinny, cards, and many other games, after the dance. After a while the man looked through the window, and saw a fish-trap built clean across the river; and he thought to himself, "I am going to cross the river on the dam this evening." But his grandparents told him not to go down to the river, because something might get hold of him and devour him. He obeyed them and stayed in the house. But the next morning he said to himself, "I will go down and take a swim. I wonder why they did not want me to go down to the river." So he left the house and began to wade out into the river. Soon eels began to stick to his legs, and hung fast. But they did not bother him, and he kept on swimming. After he was through swimming, he took two of the largest eels into the house. His grandparents were sitting by the fire; when he came in, he placed the eels near them. But the old couple became scared. The old woman crawled away on her hands and knees to the end of the house, and the old man hid himself in a corner. In the mean time the young man whittled a small stick and roasted the eels on it. When they were about to be done, they began to smell very nice, and the old people came out from their corners and partook of the meal.

In the evening, after the old people had gone to bed, the young man crossed the river on the fish-weir, and came to the dance-house. He looked in, and saw a woman whom he knew. She was standing in the middle of the room, and people were dancing around her in a circle. Every one who went by touched her on the top of the head. Soon the dancers noticed him, and they began to shout, "Do you see that *stöndi* outdoors looking into the house?" The young man ran away, and went

back to his grandparents, who said to him, "Whenever anybody comes here and eats lice, he becomes a resident of this village, and cannot go back any more. You are still a live person and able to go back." But he did not want to go back yet, because he wanted to take another good look at the dance. So, when night came, he crossed the river again and went to the dance-house. There the same woman was distributing presents which had been put in her grave when she was buried, saying, "Your brother sends you this; your father sent you this; your mother sends you this." When the people in the house saw him, they said, "That *stōndi* is looking in again. Do you see him?" So he went back to his grandparents, and said, "My children are waiting for me, and I have to go back." And about eight o'clock he started on his way home.

In the mean time his body, that was lying near the house covered up with boards, was getting rotten. His mouth came out of shape, and his flesh was beginning to look like a sponge. Near noontime on the fifth day, his corpse began to crack and squeak. It squeaked four times, and his sons took away the boards carefully. When it squeaked the fifth time, the body seemed to move. Then his children took off all covers from him, except a single blanket. As soon as this was done, his body stopped squeaking. Suddenly he began to move his arms and legs under the blanket, and soon he stretched his feet. His oldest son was watching him all the time. He had made a blazing fire by his side. The dead man threw off his blanket and sat up. His long hair was hanging down in front of him, and reached way down to his waist. His son said to him, "My father, I am watching you. I have been watching you all the time." To this he replied something that the boy could not understand. And the boy said to him, "My father, I do not know what you said." So he said to his son, "I have some lunch here in a little basket. You may eat it. Your grandmother sends it to you." But the boy could not see the basket at all, and shouted to his brothers, "Come here, our father has come back!" They all hurried up and came to see their father. They wanted to warm some water and bathe him in it; but he said, "I am not going to take a bath, my children. I got back all right." His eyes appeared to be swelled, as if he had been asleep for a long time. When he arose from the ground, he said to his sons, "You need not eat the lunch I brought now. You can look for it in the water to-morrow. I have in it one cooked and one fresh flounder." On the next morning the boys found many flounders in the river, some half cooked, and others half fresh, swimming about in the water. And this man never grew old, but always remained a young man. Only his children were getting old, very, very old.



## II. THE LONG NIGHT

Once upon a time night came, and the daylight never appeared. And people woke up just the same as they did in the daytime, although it was dark. And then they would get sleepy and go to bed again. In the night they would take torches and chop wood by this light. But people began to starve, because they could not hunt or fish in the dark. It was thus perfectly dark for about ten days, and people began to think that the sun had gone way down south. On the eleventh day they saw the sun rise from the south, and stop over their heads as at noon. And the sun stayed there for a whole day, and it never grew dark. Then the sun started again slowly, and went down its usual way. The next day it rose from the east as usual. And after that people were satisfied, because all kinds of fish came ashore, which they picked up and divided among themselves.

## 12. THE BATTLE IN THE AIR

Once upon a time two Indians met each other. One of them had a fisher-dog, and the other a dog made of fur-seal skin filled with a sort of gravel. When they met, the man with the fur-seal dog asked the other one whether he was a man of importance. Scarcely had he asked this question when the fisher-dog jumped at him. But he dodged, and said to his dog, "If I should give out, come and help me." He began to fight with the dog. But he soon gave out and asked his dog for help. The two dogs clashed. They stood up on their hind-legs and fought vigorously. Neither of them fell. Soon they started to go up in the air slowly, until they were out of sight. They kept on going up until they came to the moon. There the stone dog chewed up the arms and legs of the fisher-dog, and remained the sole inhabitant of the moon. And this is the dog who looks like a man, and whom people see in the moon.

## 13. THE UNDERGROUND PEOPLE

In a village on Coos Bay lived a people called Baltiasa. They were big, tall Indians, and lived underground. Their food was fish, which they caught on long fish-poles and then swung ashore, no matter how large the fish was. Their greatest sport was to dive in the water. They could dive and swim under water across the river and back again. They made pots of stones. They could float large stones. Whenever they floated stones, they would talk to heaven, that the rock should not sink. They could put a rock on the water, stand on top of it, and it would never sink. They could also float on feathers. They caught oysters by putting a rock on the top of their heads and walking around under the water. Their hats were made of carbuncles (?), and their knives of big, hard bones. They would club each other with these knives over the head without being hurt. They were very mean, and all the other Indians

were afraid of them. They abused the Indians so much that it was decided to drive them out by force. This was done, and those people made two rafts, and went down the river until they came to the ocean. But the water was very rough. So they poured seal-oil on the water, and the ocean became perfectly smooth. They then sailed away, and separated later. One raft went north, and the other south. And nobody knows where they went, because they were never seen again.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK.